DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 415 799 HE 030 950

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TITLE The Cultures of the Community College. ASHE Annual Meeting Paper.
PUB DATE 1997-11-00
NOTE 26p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Association for the Study of Higher Education (22nd, Albuquerque, NM, November 6-9, 1997).
PUB TYPE Information Analyses (070) -- Speeches/Meeting Papers (150)
EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Access to Education; *College Environment; College Presidents; *College Role; *Community Colleges; Community Services; Higher Education; Human Services; *Institutional Mission; Leadership; Models; Organizational Climate; Organizational Theories; School Business Relationship; School Community Relationship; Student Development; Two Year Colleges
IDENTIFIERS *ASHE Annual Meeting

ABSTRACT

This paper reviews the literature on specific and multiple organizational cultures identified with the community college. The community college culture is seen as both fulfilling organizational purpose (a functional perspective) and expressing organizational behaviors (an interpretive perspective), including the beliefs, values, and ideologies of organizational participants. Four dominant cultures are identified: (1) traditional the college mission and goals focus largely upon the intellectual and cognitive development of students and the institutional role of providing access to educational opportunities, largely through university transfer and preparation for employment; (2) service the college possesses the characteristics of a human service organization with a mandate to protect and promote the well-being of its clients (students); (3) hierarchical the college president and administrative boards demonstrate strong leadership traits and uphold ideals of social transformation and excellence for both students and the organization; and (4) business the community college adopts the practices and values of business and industry in its operational styles. Analysis of the functionalist and interpretive perspectives of culture suggest multiple cultures with considerable variance among community colleges. (Contains 100 references.) (DB)

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The Cultures of the Community College

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September 1997
For presentation at the annual meeting of the Association for the Study of Higher Education
November 1997, Albuquerque, N. M.

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This paper was presented at the annual meeting of the Association for the Study of Higher Education held in Albuquerque, New Mexico, November 6-9, 1997. This paper was reviewed by ASHE and was judged to be of high quality and of interest to others concerned with higher education. It has therefore been selected to be included in the ERIC collection of ASHE conference papers.

The Cultures of the Community College

Introduction

Community college scholarship reflects a limited awareness of multiple organizational cultures and a lack a cognizance, with few exceptions, of interpretive perspectives of organizational life. Although community colleges are characterized as multiple purpose institutions with broad and various missions, the assumption that organizational life, and thus culture, is uniform both among community colleges and within each community college pervades scholarly and non-scholarly writing. This dominant projection of the community college is continually reinforced not only when a functionalist perspective is employed but also when culture is assumed as singular.

Examinations of organizational culture, however, are beginning to find their way into community college literature. Richardson and Wolverton (1994), in examining community college leadership, use a cultural framework to develop what might best be described as power domains involving faculty and administrators. Their analysis focusses primarily upon the dynamics of two groups in influencing organizational actions. Cooper and Kempner (1993), in a case study of organizational disintegration, rely upon a cultural perspective that provides sense-making to the behaviors of two dominant groups in a community college. Their analytical framework uses Goulding's concept of locals and cosmopolitans. Earlier case studies of the community college by Weis (1985) and London (1978) on faculty and student behaviors also adopt cultural perspectives. Not only are such examinations infrequent but also they are limited to specific concerns of the scholars: for Richardson and Wolverton (1994), it is leadership strategies; for Cooper and Kempner (1993), it is leadership action and its outcomes; for Weis (1985) and London (1978), it is social reproduction of race and class.

This present discussion endeavors to provide a broader analysis with wider applicability. It relies upon community college literature, both its implications and suggestions. In my analysis of the literature, I detect the presence of specific and multiple organizational cultures identified with the community college. Community colleges are assumed to be dominated by one principal culture, yet the dominant culture may differ from one institution to another given the variant assumptions about which culture is the principal one.

The literature over the past two decades on organizational behaviors in the community college encourages us to understand the community college as a particular kind of organization with several purposes. Their proclaimed and acknowledged mission, for example, indicates that these are institutions with multiple goals, some of which are viewed as incompatible either with other goals or with institutional outcomes (Deegan, Tillery, and Melone, 1985; Frye, 1992).

Their mission is seen to dictate organizational behaviors, and by implication organizational culture.

Although a prevalent concern about culture in organizations has much to do with the presence of single or multiple cultures and whether organizations are cultures or possess cultures (Owen, 1995), this present discussion assumes that organizations have multiple cultures, with one in dominance as the primary culture and others subordinate as sub-cultures. The characteristics of organizational culture are less contentious and include such qualities as beliefs, values, attitudes, philosophies, and rituals; shared interpretations of experiences; common practices and explanations of events and behaviors; and similar narratives, stories, and jokes about institutional history (Bolman and Deal, 1991; Kuh, Schuh, Whitt, and Associates, 1988; Schein, 1985). Culture is viewed as a way of doing and behaving by groups within an organization (Cooper and Kempner, 1993; Owen, 1995; Tierney, 1988). It is also argued that culture has a purpose or function in an organization (Schein, 1985).

In this analysis, I look at community college cultures as both fulfilling organizational purpose and as expressive of organizational behaviors, including the beliefs, values, and ideologies of organizational participants. The former view of culture is often referred to as a functional perspective; the latter, an interpretive perspective. Schein (1985) clarifies the functional perspective: culture solves a group's problems of "survival in and adaptation to the external environment" and provides "integration of its internal processes to ensure the capacity to continue to survive and adapt" (p. 50). For the community college, this suggests that the mission, goals, and strategies of the organization have a purpose, and that purpose is aimed broadly at survival, growth, and development. Furthermore, organizational processes not only aid in survival and external adaptation but also offer sense-making devices for organizational participants, giving them rationales and emotional support for their actions (Cameron and Ettington, 1988).

The interpretive view of organizational culture examines the organization for its created meanings, much in the same way as the anthropologist was traditionally understood to study and interpret the behaviors of other societies, or indeed as a literary critic would examine and interpret a literary text (Frye, 1962). Unlike the functional view which sees culture or cultures within an organization, the interpretive view sees the organization as a culture (Owen, 1995; Tierney, 1987).

In examining both the functions of the institution and the meanings which can be attributed to institutional life, I turn to the published literature on the community college primarily from the period of the past two decades--the 1990s and 1980s. I organize this literature from a functional perspective, yet I also critique this perspective, indicating both its weaknesses and the inconsistencies. I note that the literature as a whole implicitly conceptualizes the community college as possessing four distinct cultures: a traditional culture, a service culture, a hierarchical

culture, and a business culture. In developing a profile of each culture, I draw out those aspects which express the assumed values, beliefs, and shared meanings of organizational members. In a subsequent section, I address the concept of interpretive culture and critique the functionalist perspective.

Four cultures of the community college

Four dominant cultural types are articulated in the literature on the community college as characterizing the values, purposes, organizational strategies, actions, and history of these institutions. These categories are not dissimilar to those, derived from Cameron and Ettington (1988), used by Smart, Kuh, and Tierney (1997) in an investigation of organizational effectiveness in two-year colleges. The strength of the present four categories--traditional, service, hierarchical, and business--is that they capture a larger range of organizational behaviors and assumptions pertaining to the community college, such as the central role of students and student development and the fervor of community college leaders and supporters over institutional mission and accomplishments. These behaviors and assumptions are not apparent in the Cameron and Ettington (1988) categories. The present categories are drawn from the literature on the community college rather from management science literature or from the literature on four year colleges and universities. This literature suggests that community colleges are primarily one of four cultural types, and the implication is that a dominant, monolithic culture permeates the community college.

The Traditional Culture

The traditional culture of the community college is contextualized within and related to, explicitly or implicitly, historical, political, and social forces. Organizational purpose is seen as reflective of external environmental factors, such as social conflicts between individual upward social mobility and the preservation of the social status quo (Brint and Karabel, 1989; Weis, 1985) and institutional drive for legitimacy, prestige, and social status (Clowes and Levin, 1994; Dougherty, 1994; Frye, 1992; Kempner, 1991). College mission and goals focus largely upon the intellectual and cognitive development of students, on the traditional role of the institution as providing access to educational opportunities, largely through university transfer and preparation for employment, what Cross (1985) sees as the vertical focus of the community college mission. The role of the institution is not unlike the traditional junior college role (Diener, 1986), with the community college placed between the high school and the four year college or university. It is this culture which is most forcefully criticized by scholars for the failure of the institution to live up to expectations, including university transfer rates, curricula reflective of the university model, baccalaureate degree performance of students, and an

intellectual environment (Brint and Karabel, 1989; Clark, 1980; Clowes and Levin, 1994; Dougherty, 1994; Kempner, 1991; McGrath and Spear, 1991; Richardson et al., 1983).

The traditional culture is reflected in critical scholarly perspectives aimed at the community college. Institutional performance in several areas is challenged. These challenges can be seen in accounts of the erosion of curriculum quality (Richardson, Fisk, and Okun, 1983), the reproduction of social and economic inequities (Weis, 1985), the decrease in educational attainment of students (Richardson and Bender, 1987), the dominance of a "practitioners' culture" over an intellectual or academic culture (McGrath and Spear, 1991), and the ambivalent attitude toward women, particularly women's experiences, in the community college (Twombly, 1993).

In the traditional culture, organizational behaviors are given meaning by their association with traditional, if not idyllic, academic values. McGrath and Spear (1991) provide, perhaps, the best examples of the traditional culture. They assume that organizational actions are grounded in either intellectualism or rationality, and their environment is modeled after university norms of peer judgement, scholarship, and the primacy of disciplined thought, directed toward serving the interests and values of faculty, as if these were the *raison d'ëtre* of the community college.

In this culture, institutional emphasis, in such areas as governance, instructional organization, and programming, is given to the academic aspects of the institution: to academic students, academic faculty, and academic life in the community college (McGrath and Spear, 1991; Richardson and Bender, 1987; Richardson et al., 1983; Seidman, 1985). This condition suggests, for example, that within the community college hierarchy, or "organizational totem pole", that the academic faculty occupy a higher station than their occupational or vocational colleagues (Seidman, 1985). The justification for this placement is that the key to both opportunity and social influence is held by the academic faculty in the community college (McGrath and Spear, 1991; Richardson and Bender, 1987; Siedman, 1985). Reading, writing, and critical thinking are the core skills required by students for further advancement, whether they are university transfer, occupational, or vocational students. The academic disciplines are seen as either the keeper of the keys for opportunity and potential social influence (McGrath and Spear, 1991; Seidman, 1985) or as those responsible for holding these keys (Richardson et al., 1983).

Their members are largely academic faculty, those in the areas of university transfer arts and sciences. Their pedagogical bent is imitative of the university: to cultivate intellectual and cognitive abilities of students (McGrath and Spear, 1991). Their goal for students is either critical literacy (Richardson et al., 1983) or interpretive literacy, where intellectual dialogue is an educational objective, although infrequently achieved (McGrath and Spear, 1991). Membership also includes that group of faculty and administrators either referred to as the old-timers or the originals (in some cases this includes support staff whose work experiences, such

as laboratory assistants, put them in contact with academic faculty): many began their institutional affiliation in the late 1960s and early 1970s when the community college emphasized university transfer programs (Dennison and Gallagher, 1986; Tillery and Deegan, 1985).

These are the faculty who seek to influence the decisions and operations of their college. Power and authority are contested because the formal bureaucracy is not the same as the structure of expertise. This structure is based upon discipline knowledge, and parallels university customs and rituals (Adams, 1976; Bergquist, 1992). Yet, in spite of the contested terrain of institutional control, the influence of their members has not flourished; indeed, in the past two decades it has diminished. Seidman (1985) notes that an "increasing sense of hierarchy in the community college" (p. 43) has led to faculty powerlessness; thus, those who seek power and opportunity endeavor to become administrators. Owen (1992) identifies those faculty who are influential in organizational life with the faculty union--members in positions of leadership. Faculty active in political processes in the institution, therefore, find themselves moving toward formal roles of responsibility. As union leaders, they are obliged to criticize management--the administrators and the governing board--and their role as critics is contained within a labor relations context. As administrators, they become formally connected to authority, and their administrative experiences insulate them from the experiences of faculty critics. Ironically, they will "come to see faculty as complainers rather than concerned educators" (Siedman, 1985, p. 249). It is no wonder that their numbers or at least their causes are perceived to be diminishing in the community college (McGrath and Spear, 1991).

Although they argue that the culture of the community college of the 1990s is organized along social not intellectual dimensions, McGrath and Spear (1991), as academic faculty themselves, appeal for an academic culture which is "organized according to academic and intellectual rules of discourse and decision" (p. 154). This is an organizational model often referred to as a collegium. Baldridge Ecker, and Riley (1977), in describing models of governance in four year colleges and universities, dismiss the collegium as a typical model for higher educational institutions, as do others (e.g., Bergquist, 1992), more appropriately belonging to an earlier age, or as one which is located more in the imagination than in practice (Adams, 1976; Rhoades, 1990).

In some community colleges (see Cooper and Kempner, 1993) the traditional culture is more political than academic. In these colleges, organizational histories--and a generation of habits--guide actions. Such an environment is comparable to the political arena of organizations (Mintzberg, 1983) where conflict between and among influencers characterizes organizational life. No one group or type has consistent and unchallenged control or influence over organizational actions. Contested areas abound, and challenges to the existing formal structure of authority are manifest in bargaining behaviors in unionized institutions and in deal-

making and alliances (e.g., between faculty and governing board) in non-unionized institutions (Alfred and Smydra, 1985; Owen, 1992; Skolnik, 1988). This may suggest that while the traditional culture is a dominant one, other groups are highly influential and vie for dominance on a regular basis. It may also explain why the members of the dominant group in a traditional culture in the community college are viewed as the opposition by progressive forces, especially by management which endeavors to move the institution forward and toward greater alignment with business and industry (see Roueche, Taber, and Roueche, 1995).

There are variations in the conception of the traditional culture as well as inconsistencies in its values. Rhoads and Valadez (1996), in their scholarship on the community college, assume the presence of a traditional culture, emphasizing knowledge and intellectual values. They argue for a new agenda in the community college, a change from the traditional canon of Western knowledge to "critical multiculturalism...which combines the conditions of cultural diversity with the emancipatory vision of a critical educational practice borrowing from feminism, post-modernism, and critical theory" (p. 9). While on the one hand they set out a radical change process for the institution, on the other hand they place themselves within the same cultural context as McGrath and Spear (1991) who value only the intellectual, knowledge based aspects of the community college and Richardson et al. (1983) who emphasize intellectual and academic development. Missing from Rhoads and Valadez (1996) are references to or cognizance of such behaviors of organizational life such as institutional employee practices, including employer and employee relations, and institutional management, including financial management. Characteristic of the traditional culture, scholars and practitioners emphasize curriculum and instruction, particularly from the academic perspective, ignoring numerous other aspects of institutional life.

The Service Culture

In the service culture, it is assumed that institutional progress, i.e., improvement, is underway, ongoing, or can be made--whether such progress is in the area of university transfer rates, institutional retention of students, social equity, or in the quality of learning (Astin, 1985; Cohen & Brawer, 1996; Dennison and Gallagher, 1986; Friedlander and Macdougall, 1992; Nora, Attinasi Jr., and Matonak, 1990; Rendon and Mathews, 1994; Roueche and Roueche, 1993; Tinto, 1987). The community college possesses the characteristics of a human service organization (Hasenfeld, 1983): people are its focus, its clients, and the institution has a mandate to protect and promote the well-being of those whom it serves.

This culture is influenced and maintained by those who attribute performance of an institution to improvement of students (see, for example, Cohen, 1990; Roueche and Baker III, 1987; Roueche and Roueche, 1993). Institutional effectiveness is conceived of as an issue of

relevancy: is instructional delivery effective for today's student? does the college interact with its community appropriately so that community needs are met? is the curriculum current?

The service culture focuses upon students: students as learners, students as clients, students as representative of the community, and students as "thermometer" of society (Adelman, 1994). The range of judgements on the treatment of students includes praise for exemplary programs (Roueche and Roueche, 1993) as well as disappointment for neglect of minority students (Rendon and Mathews, 1994). Underlying these judgements is the belief that the institution can progress and improve, ultimately benefiting students.

Connected to an interpretation of the community college mission to serve students and aligned with an educational philosophy based upon student development theory and practices (Cohen and Brawer, 1996), the service culture nurtures those whom it serves and is dominated by student service personnel and those with student service and counseling backgrounds. Pursuers of equality and opportunity for students (McGrath and Spear, 1991), facilitators and supporters of student growth (Richardson and Bender, 1987), emphasizing an institution that is student centered (Siedman, 1985), those in the service culture, which may include administrators, faculty, support staff, and board members, work to "warm the heart" (Shaw, 1989). Rather than emphasize cognitive development alone, these agents of student welfare see their role in the community college as, at one extreme, "breaking the cycle of poverty and despair" (Richardson and Bender, 1987, p, 28), and in the main as promoting the interests of students, particularly by upholding notions of equality and opportunity (McGrath and Spear, 1991), and by ensuring student success. Administrators are committed to the expansion of mission (Richardson et al., 1983), which leads to increased enrolments and organizational growth. Innovations for student learning (McGrath and Spear, 1991) are driven by under prepared students in need of remediation (McGrath and Spear, 1991; Richardson et al., 1983) and expansion of student numbers which cannot be accommodated by traditional approaches.

For faculty and support staff, mainly those in the student services area, the improvement of students through counseling, education, and training comprises the social service mission of the community college. For counselors, it means the development and improvement of the whole student and includes increasing opportunity for social and economic advancement for students. For faculty, improvement of students may mean "to personally and humanistically open the eyes of their working class students to new ideas" (London, 1978, p. 46) or the amelioration of skill deficiencies (McGrath and Spear, 1991), or indeed the encouragement of social competence (McGrath and Spear, 1991).

New faculty, educated, trained and with experience in environments as disparate as graduate schools, the military, business and industry, and unionized shops, are not only disconnected from each other but also when new to the community college alien to the culture of open access and student service orientation. They are soon "drawn into and reshaped by the

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culture of open access" (McGrath and Spear, 1991, p. 140), which is one of the integrating functions of the service culture. The blending of values and roles of some vocational instructors, numerous instructors of adult basic education, and counselors to promote individual affective development and foster mechanical skill acquisition (McGrath and Spear, 1991) has not only institutionalized the concept of a student centered college but also created tensions and conflicts between those who champion intellectual work--often those in the traditional culture--and those who support either more practical training or student development.

The service culture defines students broadly, to include the immediate external community, and views the function of the community college as directed to the personal, social, and economic welfare of students. Furthermore, the service culture is a responsive and adaptable institution, reacting to both the needs and demands of students as well as those of the community (McCartan, 1983). Thus, the connection between the institution and its external environment suggests that the community college is an open system (Morgan, 1986) participating in a fluid, dynamic environment where there is continual exchange of ideas, people, and behaviors between the community college and its external environment.

For some, this culture stresses remediation (Cross, 1985; McGrath and Spear, 1991), which is seen as the result of liberal approaches to access (McCartan, 1983; Richardson et al., 1983), leading ultimately to the dilution of academic curriculum (McGrath and Spear, 1991; Richardson et al., 1983). But more generally, the emphasis upon service to students and to the institution as an open system (Morgan, 1986), where there is an exchange between internal activities and external ones, suggests that the community college is both responsive to societal needs and to personal development and aspirations of its students (Cohen and Brawer, 1982; Dennison and Gallagher, 1986). The emphasis is consistent with the mission of the community college as a responsive and adaptive institution (Deegan, Tillery, and Melone, 1985; Dennison and Levin, 1989).

In short, the service culture pays homage to teaching, learning, and services for students (e.g., counseling, tutoring, advising), stresses access for all, focuses upon student development and student performance, and demonstrates behaviors which suggest community responsiveness (Cohen and Brawer, 1982; Dassance, 1994; Dennison and Levin, 1989; Roueche and Baker III, 1987). This is the culture which is praised for innovation and student focus (O'Banion, 1989; Roueche and Roueche, 1993), but also the culture which is criticized for de-valuing intellectualism (London, 1978; McGrath and Spear, 1991), for reducing the quality of programs (Richardson et al., 1983), and frustrating the opportunities for students to proceed to baccalaureate studies (Dougherty, 1994; Richardson and Bender, 1987).

Although two extensive studies in the early 1980s clearly enunciated the flaws and failures of the service culture--one in Texas and the other in Phoenix, Arizona (Richardson et al., 1983; Roueche and Comstock, 1981)--the efficacy of this culture has strong determinants and

conditions for its prevalence. First, the open access mission of the community college with its emphasis upon equality and opportunity is easily interpreted as a mandate for community colleges to pursue such goals as minority advancement, student enrolment retention, community service, and remedial and developmental education. Second, the imperative for growth, particularly in student numbers, as a measure of institutional achievement is usually rewarded with financial resources (Breneman and Nelson, 1981; Cohen and Brawer, 1996)--an incentive to widen the door to include more educational diversity, which in turn means a broader and more difficult to manage curriculum (Richardson et al., 1983). And finally, the role of student services personnel, often a large group in the community college performing jobs which have much more in common--serving students--than most other areas in the college is not to be ignored. They have become a more powerful group on campus in the past decade given the external environment with its social problems and its lack of direction in solving these problems. These problems arrive at the community college, and the expertise, or at least the formal structure where these problems can be addressed, resides in student services (Dassance, 1994; McCabe, 1989; Shaw, 1989).

The Hierarchical Culture

The missionary zeal which sustained the development of the community colleges in the U.S. in the 1950s and 1960s and in Canada in the late 1960s and early 1970s (Cohen and Brawer, 1996; Dennison and Gallagher, 1986) accompanied a set of ideals for the community college that endure into the 1990s. These include the ideal of social transformation to achieve democratic values such as equality and individual mobility through education (Brint and Karabel, 1989). These ideals are reflected in the concepts and principles associated with the institution--adaptability, flexibility, open access, community responsiveness, and a focus upon the learner (Deegan et al., 1985; Dennison and Levin, 1989; Gleazer, 1984; Roueche and Baker III, 1987). These principles are treated as moral imperatives which are manifested in the drive for improved performance both for students (Astin, 1985; Richardson, 1984) and for the organization (Roueche et al., 1989).

Mission, vision, and values are terms which underlie the hierarchical structure and moral domain of community colleges (see Gleazer, 1984; Roueche et al., 1989). The specific morality is clearly revealed in characterizations of leadership (Amey and Twombly, 1992; Fryer and Lovas, 1991; Roueche et al., 1989; Vaughan, 1986). The concept of leadership is hierarchical, presidential, seen as embodied in a single individual who possesses particular traits and who behaves according to expectations for a leader, and one who upholds and extols particular values (Levin, 1995; Roueche et al., 1989; Vaughan, 1986). Some have even suggested that autocratic leadership behaviors in decision making are common in the community college (Bryant, 1992).

Initially, ideals of social transformation and democratic values were established in the foundational years of the organization, when the philosophy and resultant mission were embodied in a single, powerful figure who represented the aspirations of the organization (Dennison and Gallagher, 1986). Based upon organizational principles of the clan or collective (Levin and Dennison, 1989; Morgan, 1986), organizational behaviors are seen as bound to each other through a central philosophy or value system. With the development of the organization, such initial missions evolved into ones based upon less commonly held values, and organizational behaviors become less bonded. A more formal and bureaucratic structure and accompanying processes evolved (Raisman, 1990). By the 1980s, the call for "visionary" leadership was an appeal for the incorporation of foundational values, such as democratic values of equal opportunity for citizens, into a formal and bureaucratic structure (Gleazer, 1984; Roueche et al., 1989). The twinning of the moral and bureaucratic components provided new status for the community college as an institution of "excellence" (Roueche et al., 1989), one which combined populist values such as individual betterment through adding value to ensure achievement (Diener, 1986) with rational systems of organization, including management through planning, organizing, budgeting, staffing, and evaluation (Deegan, 1992), that comprise bureaucratic organizations.

Shaped by those who embrace and often extol somewhat nebulous and idealistic but motivational qualities of the community college which include the pursuit of organizational excellence and success (Roueche and Baker III, 1989), the hierarchical culture re-defines the community college as a redeeming institution, one potentially superior to other educational institutions because of its connection to social ideals, particularly to personal achievement of the underprivileged (Gleazer, 1984; Griffith and Connor, 1994; Roueche and Baker III, 1987). Committed to the improvement of students and to society, the hierarchical culture seeks to alter both radically so that "the American dream of equal opportunity [is] for all" (Roueche and Baker III, 1987, p. 3). This transformation is directed by those who are described as "zealots", primarily administrative leaders who are believers in the possibilities of their students to realize the American dream, similar to the aspirations of generations of immigrants to the U. S. (Richardson and Bender, 1987). These behaviors suggest that the community college is not only an institution but also a social movement (Roueche and Baker, 1987).

Committed to concepts of excellence (Roueche and Baker III, 1987), and largely driven by administrative and board priorities and values for increasing access and maintaining, or developing, high academic standards (Roueche and Baker III, 1987), the hierarchical culture promotes achievement (McGrath and Spear, 1991) and seeks not only legitimacy but also increased social status for the community college (Roueche et al., 1989). Using a moral position for their actions, these board members, administrators, and a handful of faculty work tirelessly for improvement, both for improvements in student performance (Roueche and Roueche, 1993)

and improvements in organizational functioning, such as greater productivity (Baker and Associates, 1995; Griffith and Conner, 1994).

Members include both the formal leaders and would-be leaders of the organization. Indeed, leadership is a concept that binds the members of this culture together. The moral basis of their concept of leadership is conveyed in the words "vision", "transformation", "values", and "excellence" (Baker and Associates, 1992). Theirs is a quasi-religious morality which is closely associated with the concept of religious mission and the pursuit of ideals such as democratic notions of freedom (Amey and Twombly, 1992; Roueche and Baker III, 1987).

Administrators foster an institutional work ethic, noting methods to improve individual and institutional performance, identifying approaches and programs that stimulate improvements, and promoting the results of these approaches and programs (Hockaday and Silvers, 1995; Roueche et al., 1995). The handful of faculty who are part of this group are usually inspired by career development and promotion, and such advancement in the community college is limited to administrative career paths (Siedman, 1985).

In the hierarchical culture, the fostering of excellence is represented in a reward structure. In some community colleges, this is enacted through the various ceremonies and rituals of institutional life. Ceremonies include employee recognition, service awards for employees, and student graduation events which emphasize achievement and performance. In other community colleges, this reward structure is enacted through the allocation of resources. Funds for travel, support for new programs, and administrative promotions are linked to the compatibility of performance with the priorities of the chief executive officer. These priorities will have their basis in actions which bring high visibility and social recognition (Baker and Associates, 1995; Roueche and Baker, 1987; Roueche et al., 1989).

In this culture, organizational behaviors are directed toward recognition and acclaim. These behaviors include the use of newsletters and publications to extol the achievements of employees or institution and the pursuit of media coverage to gain a high profile for the college. This orientation toward visible and acclaimed performance leads to the use of models and systems of improvement (Baker and Associates, 1995; Gordon, 1995; Roueche et al., 1989).

In this culture, the president or chief executive officer is not only the institutional manager and creator of organizational climate but also the interpreter and communicator of mission (Vaughan, 1989). In this hierarchical structure, the president is the chief moral authority, one who "frames and defines the reality of others" (Smircich and Morgan, 1982, p. 258). Excellent community colleges have excellent leaders, and these leaders are presidents (Roueche et al., 1989). In this culture, the college is identified with the president or chief executive officer (Hockaday and Silvers, 1995), and institutional achievements are framed as the accomplishments of leaders (Roueche et al., 1989; Vaughan, 1986).

The limitations of the hierarchical culture are likely based upon its strength--an emphasis upon highly motivated, energetic, and even inspirational formal leaders. Singular or hierarchically focused leadership in the community college is also seen as responsible for monolithic and oppressive value structures (Amey and Twombly, 1992), for administratively dominated environments which ignore collegiality (Raisman, 1990), and for organizational disintegration (Owen, 1992). While responsible for considerable organizational progress in areas such as increasing access for communities and developing and achieving public recognition of the institution, this culture neglected other areas such as employee participation in various forms of decision-making (Raisman, 1990) and governance (Fryer and Lovas, 1991) and recognition of multiple cultural values and diverse individual perspectives within the organization (Cooper and Kempner, 1993; Owen, 19995; Amey and Twombly, 1992).

The Business Culture

The 1980s for community colleges, four-year colleges, and universities can be characterized by their emphasis upon two distinct resources--financial and human. Higher education shared vulnerability to economic and social forces no different from business and industry. And, the approaches of business and industry to cope with the external environment were suggested for higher education institutions (Keller, 1983; Kotler and Murphy, 1981). Strategic planning, as well as Total Quality Management, were among these approaches (Baker and Associates, 1995; Richardson, and Rhodes, 1985). The path to survival, if not excellence, was to be found in a more entrepreneurial and business-like way of conducting organizational activities.

Calls for the community college to respond to national requirements for competitiveness, toward the training of the workforce, and towards increasing entrepreneurial behaviors (Connor, 1989; Griffith and Connor, 1994; Knowles, 1995) were also appeals for the community college to model the practices of business and industry (Baker and Associates, 1995; Roueche, et al., 1995). With its connection to the community and certainly as a consequence of its training focus, the community college is suitably disposed to adopt the practices and even the values of business and industry. While university values have influenced the community college (Dennison and Gallagher, 1986), with the vocational and career program focus of community colleges, especially in those jurisdictions which exclude or downplay the transfer function, these institutions look to the corporate and business world for operational styles (Baker and Associates, 1995).

Faculty and administrators drawn from these sectors further an emphasis upon a business-like approach to functioning, as do greater institutional-business collaborations (Roueche et al., 1995). The ubiquitousness of publications on improvements in the management of business and industry has meant that community college managers could find ready solutions to organizational problems. Accessible advice could be adopted, and thus community colleges too

could achieve excellence, have effective managers, and thrive on chaos, or at least survive dramatic changes in the external environment (Dennison, 1995; Roueche et al., 1995).

Attempts to model the practices of the corporate world, particularly those practices which are highly lauded, have become incorporated into the community college literature through accounts of effective strategies and exemplary cases (Alfred and Carter, 1996). National and regional meetings and conferences of such groups as the American Association of Community Colleges, Community College Consortium, and the League for Innovation in the Community College feature exemplary practices, and conference presentations and papers detail and diagram the route to effective organizational change, directed either by management alone or by management in cooperation with other segments of the institution. Corporate concepts such as quality teams, partnerships, collaborations, and executive leadership have become integral aspects of the community college (see Baker and Associates, 1995; Roueche et al., 1995). Economic development, workforce training, international development, and resource development are reported as major endeavors (Cantor, 1991; Dennison, 1995; Griffith and Connor; Knowles, 1995; Roueche et al., 1995), with, for example, 96% of U. S. community colleges reporting involvement in some form of workforce training for business, industry, labor, and government (Doucette, 1993a). In several cases, the emphasis upon this culture in the literature is hortatory: appeals are made to alter, even transform, the community college to an instrument of the economy (Griffith and Connor, 1994; Roe, 1989).

Particularly characterized by competence (Bergquist, 1992) as well as by efficiency (Baker and Associates, 1995), the community college as a business culture functions differently from a collegial environment, the prototype of the academic institution (Baldridge et al., 1977; Cohen, 1990; Raisman, 1990). Based upon organizations which feature products and profit, the business culture does not characterize the community college as a human service organization (Hasenfeld, 1983). Assumptions of this culture suggest that community colleges must resemble corporations and businesses, emphasizing efficiency, praising innovation, focusing upon customer service and addressing issues of employee relations (see Roueche et al., 1995, especially Gianini and Sarantos, 1995, and Haire and Russell, 1995). Organizational behaviors and actions are judged based upon their conformity to external economic and employment needs, and the community college endeavors to seize upon the best processes to achieve outcomes which match stakeholder expectations (Baker and Associates, 1995; Dennison, 1995; Upshaw, 1995).

One major goal of the business culture is the procurement of resources. This orientation leads the institution to take an entrepreneurial stance, and to collaborate with business and industry (Gianini and Sarantos, 1995; Knowles, 1995). Heavily involved in contract services, which may take the form of international education, workplace training, and business development, this culture functions to survive as an economically viable entity, whether through

growth or down-sizing, by effectively and efficiently managing its resources, particularly its human resources (Knowles, 1995; Roueche et al., 1995).

Pursuing production through sound management, the business culture views education as a business, and is characterized by its market orientation. Guided by a business and industry ethos of efficiency, productivity, and survival, the members of the business culture, like entrepreneurs, are both acquisitive and market sensitive. Their acquisitiveness aids in the growth of the community college--more programs, more buildings, or sites and ways to deliver their product, more students, more resources. Their market sensitivity helps them to engage their college in current trends and practices in the corporate world--they are externally focused and value a business approach, which they impose or attempt to impose upon the operations of the community college (Baker and Associates, 1995; Cantor, 1991; Clowes and Levin, 1989; Gianini and Sarantos, 1995).

Primarily administrators or administrative staff, or faculty with administrative-like jobs, their members can be found in public relations and information offices, financial and planning departments, community and continuing education programs, including contract services, human resources or personnel areas, institutional research and in executive positions including the chief executive officer and senior officers responsible for finances. Their major connection to the institution is managerial--to support the organizational purpose of efficient production of goods and services. Their emphasis for the institution is upon material gain (Raisman, 1990). For those in continuing education and contract services, revenue generation is imperative; for student services and academic administrators, student enrolments and thus revenues from fees and from government grants are primary issues for organizational survival and growth; for public information and personnel offices, the management of institutional image, public relations, and employer-employee stability are requisites for public confidence and thus public support and organizational prosperity. The use of corporate approaches, such as strategic planning and Total Quality Management, in institutional management not only rationalizes and justifies the actions of managers in community colleges because these approaches are gleaned from successful corporate practices but also influences organizational behaviors. Members of this culture adopt the practices of the corporate world and their actions are directed toward similar corporate ends: if not profits, then certainly efficiency and growth or survival (Baker and Associates, 1995; Knowles, 1995; Richardson and Wolverton, 1994).

Their connection to education and training is managerial: *"to ensure that ...[the] organization serves its basic purpose--the efficient production of specific goods or services"* (Mintzberg, 1973, p. 95). Services to students have a business function: to retain enrolments, or customers, and to ensure economic stability, or revenues (McCabe, 1989). In the instructional side, information transfer (Richardson et al., 1983)--the dissemination of information--is likely preferred for its efficiency. McGrath and Spear (1991) refer to this pedagogical practice as "the

cultural literacy agenda" where lectures, textbooks and multiple choice examinations dominate and grades are the primary goals of students. Innovators in the community college do not so much as change this cultural literacy agenda as re-package its contents for new markets reached either through distance education or on alternate sites or in non-traditional time-frames. Innovation is equated with productivity or at least as a strategy for survival; and productivity is defined as success (Doucette, 1993b; Ponitz, 1995).

The distinctions between the academic institution and other organizations such as businesses (Baldridge et al., 1977; Bergquist, 1992; Birnbaum, 1988) are largely ignored by the business culture. This environment is not conducive to traditional faculty committees, senates, or prolonged discussion, preferring instead "work teams" and project units (Baker and Associates, 1995). In the business culture, managers are strategists, controlling human and fiscal resources, "re-engineering", or "re-structuring", or "re-organizing" the institution for efficiency and a competitive advantage (Baker and Associates, 1995; Roueche, Taber, Roueche, 1995).

Faculty and staff are viewed as the suppliers of goods and services. Their professional identity is ignored or portrayed as unimportant. They are part of a "team" (Baker and Associates, 1995; Roueche et al., 1995). The traditions and practices of their disciplines give way to a more practical approach to the conduct of business. For example, if writing is a component of a business course, then the business instructor can provide this service--no need for the expertise of a writing specialist. If the client is only able to release employees for thirty hours of instruction for a computer course which normally is scheduled for forty-five hours, the college will adapt the course to the needs and expectations of the client. Academic considerations will take a secondary role.

This is not to suggest that members of the business culture believe that they provide less than high quality training or education. Indeed, the belief is that the institution is meeting the academic needs of the client by providing training which leads to tangible results, such as skills improvement and literacy in the workplace. To survive, it is argued, the community college must be market sensitive and market responsive (Alfred and Carter, 1996). This is evidently the community college envisioned by U.S. Federal initiatives (see Job Training Partnership of 1994 and Re-employment Act of 1994) from Education and Labor in the Clinton Administration and the enterprise promoted by present-day practitioners in leadership roles (see Griffith and Connor, 1994; Roueche et al., 1995).

The business culture is unlike the traditional descriptions of the community college which emphasize the institution as a vehicle for social and economic mobility, whether as a success or failure (Brint and Karabel, 1989; Cohen, 1990; London, 1978; Weis, 1985), or as an environment where teaching and learning are preeminent concerns (McGrath and Spear, 1991; Richardson et al., 1983). Nor is this culture bound by the hard and fast definitions normally ascribed to the community college, including the concepts of the open door, comprehensive

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curriculum, student centered, and learning (or teaching) institutions. Instead, this culture is pragmatic, highly responsive to it clients (those who pay) and adaptable to the marketplace (Knowles, 1995; Sheldon, 1994).

The success and dominance of the business culture stem from the utilization of another organizational group, the part-time and temporary employees. This group lacks association with the goals and purposes of the community college; they are even detached from the beliefs and values of the organization. They lack connectedness to the organization and possess the character of organizational invisibility. But this group, however, is not invisible to those who manage the business culture. They assist the community college in providing optimal services at the lowest costs; they provide the institution with flexibility in program delivery; they add to institutional expertise; and they are convenient: if there is no work, there are no direct expenditures on these employees in the community college, and, apparently, no responsibilities on the part of the institution (Roueche, Roueche, and Milliron, 1995).

Interpretive Perspective of Culture

A functionalist perspective of organizational culture suggests that however defined culture or cultures within an organization have purpose and meaning. Each of the cultures within the community college have purpose, both as integrating organizational members, through for example the provision of group boundaries, and as adapting the organization to the external environment, through for example the development of consensus on organizational strategies (Schein, 1985). An interpretive perspective, however, suggests that organizations are cultures (Smircich, 1983), constructed through the symbols and behaviors of organizational members, and not necessarily rational, purposeful, or even functional.

The multiple cultures of the community college, whether they are four in number, or five, or more, indicate that several belief systems are likely to have a presence in each community college, that there are diverse behaviors within the institution, and that organizational goals and actions of community colleges will no doubt arise from the dynamics of what Mintzberg (1983) refers to as organizational power behaviors. Furthermore, the presence of multiple cultures in the community college suggests that organizational members have differing ways of understanding and interpreting organizational life.

The presence of multiple cultures in the community college suggests as well that there is potentially considerable variance among community colleges. Areas of variance include organizational goals, where goals are not simply articulations but actions of the organization (Mintzberg, 1983), as well as organizational leadership, where leadership reflects culture (see Chaffee and Tierney, 1988), and organizational functioning, where both formal and informal processes shape and influence organizational behaviors and actions. While structures of

community colleges may be similar (Cohen and Brawer, 1996), these structures are likely no more than rationalized myths of the necessary ingredients of educational institutions (Meyer and Rowan, 1977) and not reflective of the socially constructed meanings of organizational participants and purposes of organizational actions.

The conflicting claims for and judgements about community colleges (Adelman, 1994) have led to conclusions about the uncertain nature and mission of the institutions (Frye, 1994). One of the most pervasive descriptions of the community college in the literature is dualistic. This duality is captured by Adelman (1994) who identifies two major streams of judgement directed at the community college: one stream defends the role of the institution; the other criticizes it. The defenders, claims Adelman, are prisoners of a long history of promotion for an institution that seeks both recognition and increased funding. Alternately, the critics are trapped in arguments about social class and economic power: they ignore actual behaviors of individuals and groups.

Claims and assertions about the performance of community colleges provide us with incompatible descriptions of community college behaviors: they offer seemingly contradictory images of the institution and opposing roles for the community college. From one perspective community colleges are victims of larger social forces and conditions, such as class and race conflicts and social inequality (Brint and Karabel, 1989; Kempner, 1991; London, 1978; Weis, 1985). Community colleges are noted as reproducing these forces and conditions, and organizational cultures reflect social reproduction. From another perspective, community colleges are caught "between a rock and a hard place" (Roueche and Roueche, 1993) in attempting to produce justifiable outcomes and simultaneously to fulfill their mandate of open access, a mandate which has altered organizational behaviors (Richardson et al., 1983) and, by implication, organizational culture. And, from yet another perspective, community colleges are viewed as the panacea for social and economic problems of a nation, or region, or community (Dennison and Gallagher, 1986; Gleazer, 1984; Griffith and Connor, 1994; Richardson and Bender, 1987; Roueche et al., 1995). But, this diversity and incompatibility of descriptions may be the result of different understanding of organizational culture.

Not only are there diverse interpretations of the roles of the community college and conflicting judgements of organizational behaviors but also there are competing values, such as student performance and student personal development, which are attributed to organizational ideologies. These competing values suggest the presence of multiple organizational cultures within the community college. They suggest that organizational goals and behaviors differ from one institution to another depending upon the dominance of one particular organizational culture or upon the strength of an organization's culture (Cameron and Ettington, 1988; Quinn, 1991) and that it is reasonable to assume that within a single institution, there are diverse behaviors and goals as well as numerous belief systems or ideologies.

Research on the community college to-date has ignored this concept of functional and interpretive perspectives of culture. Neither a contrast between the two perspectives nor a blending of both perspectives has achieved a place on the research agenda of scholars. A blending and a contrast of both perspectives applied to a case study of a single site or multiple sites would show not only the strengths and weaknesses of each perspective but also a broader and likely more valid view of the dynamics of organizational life. For example, where a functional perspective identifies a business culture as dominant within an institutions, an interpretive perspective might indicate that this business culture is the fabrication of managerial executives and not expressive of the beliefs and values of either other managers or of the rank and file faculty and support staff. Such an investigation would show that the college is managed as a business culture but that management is distinct from organizational behaviors. This research approach would be akin to bringing together Roueche, Baker, and Rose's (1989) study of excellent leaders and Cooper and Kempner's (1993) study of organizational disintegration. We would learn what community college leaders are encouraged and socialized to become, an actual condition of their working environment, and what actions they take in responding to this environments. We would see a broader and more valid picture of organizational life.

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